surface water run-off, soil erosion and landslides. This eventually leads to silting of river beds which may cause floods.

Distribution of tree saplings at cheaper rates to check deforestation

1102. SHRI SHAMIM HASHMI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news report on "Alarming Rise in desertification" by the noted writer Ms. Neelam Mathews which appeared in the Hindustan Times of the 9th June, 1989;

(b) if so, what corrective steps Government propose to take to meet the situation;

(c) whether Government are aware that some years back Forest Departments and Nurseries in several States used to sell tree saplings at a very nominal price;

(d) whether this practice has since been discontinued and if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(e) what steps are being taken by Government to distribute tree saplings at a nominal rate to check deforestation?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government is already implementing the Desert Development Programme which was started in 1977-78 and is now under implementation in 17 hot desert districts and 4 cold desert districts. The main activities include afforestation/pasture development, shelter-belt plantations and sand-dune stabilisation.

(c) to (e) In order to promote the Social Forestry programme, the State Forest Departments make available the seedlings either at subsidised rates or free of cost to small and marginal farmers. The criteria of seedlings' distribution is decided by the State Governments. A scheme to promote Decentralised People's Nurseries is also being implemented.

Centrally sponsored Irrigation Scheme for Orissa

1103. SHRI SUBAS MOHANTY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) what are the main sources of irrigation in Orissa;

(b) what percentage of the total area of the State is under irrigation at present; and

(c) whether any Centrally Sponsored irrigation scheme for Orissa is under consideration at present and if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): (a) The main source of irrigation in Orissa are surface and ground waters.

(b) The percentage of net area under irrigation as relatable to culturable area is 37.86 per cent.

(c) Besides the construction of Potteru Irrigation Project, Command area development works of the five irrigation projects having a total irrigatioin potential of 9.44 lakh hectares have been taken up under the centrally sponsored programmes.

Projects undertaken with World Bank assistance

1104. SHRI SUBAS MOHANTY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of the projects which are currently being under-